



HOUSING ELEMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element is one of the seven mandatory elements of the General Plan. State law requires inclusion of a Housing Element in the General Plan in recognition of the role that land use planning plays in the production of affordable housing. The Housing Element will guide City decision-making through an action program including policies, procedures, and incentives for maintaining and expanding the housing supply in the City of Laguna Woods for all income groups. The Housing Element was prepared in concert with, and consideration of, the other required elements of the General Plan. Updates to the Housing Element and/ or other General Plan elements that occur over the five-year planning period shall continue to maintain internal consistency between all General Plan elements.

The California Legislature has declared that a decent home and suitable living environment for every resident is the primary housing goal for the State. Specifically, Section 65580 of the California Government Codes sets forth the Legislature's findings as follow:

- a. *The availability of housing is of vital statewide importance, and the early attainment of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every Californian, including farm-workers, is a priority of the highest order.*
- b. *The early attainment of this goal requires the cooperative participation of government and the private sector in an effort to expand housing opportunities and accommodate the housing needs of Californians of all economic levels.*
- c. *The provision of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households requires the cooperation of all levels of government.*
- d. *Local and state governments have a responsibility to use the powers vested in them to facilitate the improvement and development of housing to make adequate provision for housing needs of all economic segments of the community.*
- e. *The Legislature recognizes that in carrying out this responsibility, each local government also has the responsibility to consider economic, environmental, and fiscal factors and community goals set forth in the general plan and to cooperate with other local governments and the state in addressing regional housing needs.*



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Section 65581 of the California Government Code reflects the Legislative intent for mandating that each City and County prepare a Housing Element:

- a. To assure that counties and cities recognize their responsibilities in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal.*
- b. To assure that counties and cities will prepare and implement housing elements which, along with federal and state programs, will move toward attainment of the state housing goals.*
- c. To recognize that each locality is best capable of determining what efforts are required by it to contribute to the attainment of the state housing goal, provided such a determination is compatible with the state housing goal and regional housing needs.*
- d. To ensure that each local government cooperates with other local governments in order to address regional housing needs.*

In order to achieve these ends, the California Government Code makes certain provisions of the Housing Element mandatory. These provisions include:

- identification and analysis of existing and projected housing needs, resources and constraints;
- a statement of goals, policies, quantified objectives, and scheduled programs for preservation, improvement and development of housing;
- identification of adequate sites for housing; and
- adequate provision for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

Specific requirements for data collection and analysis necessary to prepare the Housing Element are set forth in Government Code Section 65583 and are discussed later in this document. The Government Code also requires that each draft Housing Element be reviewed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development and that the Department's findings be incorporated prior to adoption, or that specified findings be made in response to the Department's comments.

As a mandatory component of the General Plan, the Housing Element should be reviewed on an annual basis in order to monitor progress in implementation of the programs identified to meet the housing needs of the community. The Housing Element, however, must be revised every five years as indicated in State statute. The next revision is slated for the year 2008.



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The Housing Element is organized into two sections:

Policy Document

The Policy Document defines a course of action for meeting the housing needs of the community, including those of both current and future residents, consistent with State law. The Policy Document reflects statutory requirements for courses of action appropriate to providing suitable, affordable housing in the City of Laguna Woods. These are defined through a series of “Objectives”, “Policies”, and “Implementation Measures”.

Objectives are broad statements about the ends, or outcomes, relative to housing that are to be achieved over the statutory term of the Housing Element.

Policies suggest strategies for achieving the ends identified as Objectives. Policies provide general direction to decision makers in defining specific actions to achieve Objectives.

Implementation Measures are the specific, discreet actions to be taken as part of the strategy for achieving Objectives in maintaining and promoting production of decent housing affordable to a broad range of household types at all income levels.

The Policy Document provides direction for complying with State law through inclusion of the following:

- Identification of actions to be taken to implement Objectives through administration of land use and development controls, regulatory concessions and incentives, and use of appropriate federal and state financing and subsidy programs;
- Identification of adequate sites made available through appropriate zoning to facilitate and encourage development of a variety of types of housing for all income levels;
- Measures to be taken to assist in development of adequate housing to meet the needs of low and moderate income households;
- Steps to be taken to remove governmental constraints to maintenance, improvement, and development of housing;
- Steps to be taken to conserve and improve the conditions of existing affordable housing; and



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- Steps to be taken to promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, or color.

Background Document

The Background Document includes an inventory of existing housing in the City. Demographic characteristics of the population and of projected future residents are documented as prescribed by the California Government Code. Minimum mandatory information included in the Background Report of the Housing Element is as follows:

- An analysis of population and employment trends and documentation of projections and a quantification of the City's existing and projected housing needs for all income levels including the City's share of the regional housing need as determined by the Southern California Association of Governments;
- An analysis and documentation of household characteristics including level of payment compared to ability to pay, housing characteristics, including overcrowding and housing stock condition;
- An inventory of land suitable for residential development, including vacant sites and sites having potential for redevelopment, and an analysis of the appropriateness of the zoning and the adequacy of public facilities and services for these sites;
- An analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels, including land use controls, building codes, fees, and other exactions required of developers, and local permit procedures;
- An analysis of potential and actual nongovernmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels including availability of land and project financing, the price of land, and cost of construction;
- An analysis of any special housing needs such as those of the handicapped, elderly, large families, farmworkers, and families and persons in need of emergency shelter;
- An analysis of opportunities for energy conservation with respect to residential development; and



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- An analysis of existing assisted housing developments that are eligible to change from low-income housing uses during the next 10 years due to termination of subsidy contracts, mortgage prepayment, or expiration of restrictions on use.

Public Participation

Community input was received at neighborhood workshops held in the City of Laguna Woods on March 5th, March 6th, March 12th, and March 13th, 2001. The General Plan Advisory Committee received comments on the Housing Element during a public meeting on January 14, 2002. The following groups have been asked for comment on the Housing Element:

Kennedy Commission
23861 El Toro Road, Suite 401
Lake Forest, CA 92630

Affordable Housing Clearinghouse
223 South La Esperanza
San Clemente, CA 92672

Saddleback Community Outreach
23011 Moulton Parkway, B-12
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

South County Senior Services
14300 El Toro Road, Building A, Suite 2000
Laguna Woods, CA 92653

Orange County Housing Authority
1770 North Broadway
Santa Ana, CA 92706-2642

Community Housing Resources, Inc.
1411 North Broadway
Santa Ana, CA 92706



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II. POLICY DOCUMENT

A. Objectives, Policies, and Implementation Measures

The future direction of the City to accommodate and facilitate the development and maintenance of affordable housing is broadly defined in the Objectives set forth in this section.

Policies in this section suggest courses of action that will move the City toward achieving Objectives set forth in the Housing Element.

Implementation Measures are specific actions to be taken to achieve Objectives. They are specific, discreet steps that may be included as specific tasks, for example, in the City's work programs prepared in conjunction with adoption of annual municipal budgets. Supported by the City's General Fund the City of Laguna Woods Community Development Department is the agency that will pursue and implement the Housing Element program objectives.

Objective I: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock.

Policy I.A: Initiate all appropriate efforts to preserve existing housing.

**Implementation
Measure:**

I.A.1 Establish an ad hoc panel comprised of representatives from the community, including non-profit organizations, residential builders, current residents, homeowner associations, and rental property owners as a means to implement the Housing Element's Objectives, Policies, and Implementation Measures. (Year One and continuing throughout planning term of Housing Element.)

This panel will bring forth their own experience and knowledge of housing issues specific to Laguna Woods, and can provide guidance in the following areas:

- ☐ Identify needed housing improvements.
- ☐ Identify and coordinate applications for funding sources, including grant funds.
- ☐ Identify and assist non-profit housing organizations.



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- I.A.2 As part of the annual budget process, identify and fulfill staffing needs to implement fiscal year housing improvement activities. (Annually throughout planning term of Housing Element)
- I.A.3 Partner with property owners to identify and accomplish retrofitting of dwelling units and common facilities for handicapped accessibility. The City will participate at board meetings of the housing mutuals and the Golden Rain Foundation, the principal property owner in the City, to encourage retrofitting. (Year One and continuing throughout planning term of Housing Element)
- I.A.4 Work to further promote on-going building maintenance activities. Such maintenance activities may include rehabilitation of units under private ownership, where the property owner seeks to provide affordable units. The City goal for such rehabilitation over the five-year planning period is established in table H-18. Identification of available funds can occur through the ad-hoc housing panel on an annual basis. Information related to funding sources will be available to the public through the Community Development Department and the public library located at City Hall. (Year Two and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)
- I.A.5 Establish and implement a proactive code enforcement program, working with property owners and property managers to ensure appropriate maintenance of housing units. (Year Three and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)
- I.A.6 As part of the annual General Plan status review, provide a progress report on each applicable Implementation Measure. (Annually throughout planning term of Housing Element)
- I.A.7 Adopt a property maintenance ordinance including standards for residential properties. (Year One, concurrent with adoption of a revised Zoning Code)

Objective II: Accommodate new housing for diverse needs.

Policy II.A: Promote construction of units consistent with the new construction component of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment.



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Implementation Measure:

- II.A.1 Rezone Parcel 1, "Potential Development Sites" in the Land Use Element, to High-Density Residential to accommodate construction of 113 new dwelling units. (Year One of planning term of Housing Element)
- II.A.2 Support non-profit organizations, identify developers of affordable housing utilizing a list provided by HCD and local contacts and inform these developers about development of affordable housing opportunities within the City. The City will act as a clearinghouse and intermediary between non-profit organizations and interested residential developers and, assist in application preparation and other efforts to secure funding sources for development of housing for low and moderate income residents. (Year One and throughout planning term of Housing Element)
- II.A.3 Encourage use of the City's density bonus provisions in the zoning ordinance. At the time a development application is submitted and reviewed for any residential project, it will be reviewed for General Plan (Housing Element) consistency. At this time, the Community Development staff will inform the applicants of any density bonus provisions applicable to the proposed project. Currently, 28 additional units can potentially be built as identified in Section H. Housing Resources. (Year One and throughout planning term of Housing Element)
- II.A.4 Revise the Zoning Ordinance to allow increased density and alternative development standards including reductions in required parking as additional incentives through the use permit approval process for affordable housing. (Year One of planning term of Housing Element; Zoning Code revisions related specific to land included in the inventory have commenced)
- II.A.5 In the preparation of the Laguna Woods development codes, the City will ensure provisions relating to zoning, development standards and permit processing will encourage and facilitate a variety of housing types, including multifamily rental housing, factory built housing, mobile homes, emergency shelters and transitional housing, for all persons and income levels.

The City will apply zoning, development standards and permit processing to the identified lands (See Table H-24) to permit, encourage and facilitate its development for all persons and



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income levels, including lower income families. (To be complete as appropriate within the planning period)

Objective III: Promote affordable housing opportunities for all economic segments of the community.

Policy III.A: Recognize the leadership role in housing-related issues as a function of municipal government.

Implementation Measure:

- III.A.1 Work with the County of Orange Housing Authority to secure Section 8 rental assistance for very low-income rental households, and inform local rental property owners and eligible residents of Section 8 assistance. An appropriate target is assistance to a minimum 28 units, consistent with the potential density bonus provisions for the site identified in *Section H. Housing Resources*. (Year Three and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)
- III.A.2 Take the lead in identifying alternatives for reducing the consumption and the cost of electrical energy for residential users in the City of Laguna Woods. (Year Three and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)
- III.A.3 Serve as clearinghouse for fair housing rights and responsibilities, and seek to remedy known acts of discrimination within the community. This clearinghouse will be established in City Hall and will share information with the Orange County Library section that is also housed in City Hall. The City will also disseminate fair housing information throughout Laguna Woods in a variety of community places. (Year One and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)
- III.A.4 Work with El Toro Redevelopment Planning Authority cities in promoting rehabilitation and reuse of military housing at the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station to satisfy the housing needs of south County lower-income households and homeless people. (Year Two and throughout remaining planning period of Housing Element)
- III.A.5 Participate in the County of Orange Consolidated Plan program and in the Continuum of Care to provide housing for special needs populations. Participation will include assigning a



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representative to participate in meetings and events sponsored by these programs. In addition, the *Resource Guide for Orange County Homeless* and other publications that support the program goals will be distributed from City Hall. (Year One and throughout the planning term of the Housing Element)

Objective IV. Promote local organizations, and establish City programs that strengthen housing, transportation and physical accommodations to aid persons with disabilities.

Policy IV. Maintain zoning/development standards that guide development of affordable housing near public transportation, and promote project designs that are accessible and accommodating to the disabled.

Implementation Measure:

IV.A.1 Establish plan review procedures that expedite the review and approval of residential unit modifications intended to improve mobility and accessibility. (Year One and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)

IV.A.2 Establish a central location within City Hall to disseminate information about organizations and resources in south Orange County that will benefit the quality of life of residents with disabilities. . (Year One and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)

IV.A3 In the preparation of the Laguna Woods development codes, the City will ensure that provisions relating to zoning, processing and permit procedures, building inspection and fees and exactions will not constrain the development, maintenance and improvement of housing for persons with disabilities and where appropriate provide flexibility for the development of housing for persons with disabilities. In addition, the City will provide reasonable accommodation for housing intended for persons with disabilities. . (Year One and continuing throughout remaining planning term of Housing Element)



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III. BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

The Background Document provides the quantitative and qualitative analyses necessary for reaching informed conclusions about existing housing needs, affordability of existing housing, and constraints to and opportunities for providing and maintaining affordable housing in the City of Laguna Woods. The information in this section enabled formulation of "Policies" and "Implementation Measures" included in the Policy Document for meeting existing and future housing needs in the City.

Overview

The City of Laguna Woods was incorporated in 1999 and is located in south Orange County, approximately 50 miles south of Los Angeles and approximately 75 miles north of San Diego. Unique among California cities, the City of Laguna Woods is comprised primarily of "senior citizen" communities. The median age of City of Laguna Woods' residents is 78.

Development of age-restricted seniors' communities shielded from age-based discrimination challenges was facilitated by California Civil Code Section 51.3 et. seq. The statute includes recognition that "There are senior citizens who need special living environments and services, and . . . there is an inadequate supply of this type of housing in the state." Consistent with this statute, occupancy of existing dwellings in the City of Laguna Woods is primarily limited to households which must include at least one "qualifying resident" aged 55 years or older.

The unique demographic characteristics of a City comprised predominantly of seniors' communities are reflected in housing needs and affordability issues different from more traditional cities. These characteristics (age, household size, employment, ethnicity, etc.) and the characteristics of housing in the City (number of units, tenure, size, cost, etc.) are described in this section and serve as the basis for analysis of existing and future housing needs that follow.



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A. Population Characteristics

The 2000 U.S. Census indicates a total population of 16,507¹ for the City of Laguna Woods. More than 86% of the population is aged 65 or older and the median age is 78. This compares with a countywide median age of 33.3 years.

Age restrictions on occupancy of existing dwellings in the City of Laguna Woods suggest that the average and median age of residents will remain significantly above those of the County. No future population growth attributable to natural population growth is anticipated. Increase in population will result from new housing development and continued increase in life expectancy of the average resident.

Age Cohorts

Total population and breakdown by age cohorts are included below in Table H-1. A comparison of population characteristics for the City of Laguna Woods with that of Orange County as a whole is presented in Table H-2. As shown in these comparisons, the population of the City of Laguna Woods is significantly older than the population of Orange County, in general, suggesting significantly different housing needs.

Table H - 1: Population By Age

	Under 5	5-14	15-19	20-34	35-64	65+
2000	39	42	18	163	1977	14,268
% of Total	.24%	.25%	.11%	.98%	12%	86.42%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

It should be noted that, consistent with age restrictions at the various residential communities within the City of Laguna Woods, the opportunity for anyone under the age of 35 to reside legally within the community is limited.

Race and Ethnicity

The U.S. Census provides statistics for race and ethnicity of the City's population. Table H-2 below identifies the ethnic distribution of the City's population compared to figures for Orange County.

The 2000 Census changed the manner in which race and ethnicity are defined. The definitions now recognize that "Hispanic" relates to place of origin rather than race. Table H-3 reflects the new categorization of Hispanic or Latino and race.

¹ Data is from U.S. Census 2000 and does not reflect results of a successful appeal of the City of Laguna Woods to the Bureau of the Census challenging total population and age cohort data that will establish year 2000 population as 18,208.



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Table H - 2: Racial and Ethnic Composition

Race and Ethnicity	City of Laguna Woods		County of Orange	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	15,866	96.1%	1,844,652	64.8%
Black	41	0.2%	47,649	1.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	20	0.1%	19,906	0.7%
Asian	412	2.5%	386,785	13.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	9	0.1%	8,938	0.3%
Other	31	0.2%	421,208	14.8%
Two or More Races	128	0.8%	117,151	4.1%
Total	16,507	100%	2,846,289	100%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table H - 3: Hispanic or Latino and Race

	City of Laguna Woods		County of Orange	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	340	2.1%	875,579	30.8%
Mexican	(181)	(1.1%)	(712,496)	(25.0%)
Puerto Rican	(19)	(0.1%)	(8,877)	(0.3%)
Cuban	(16)	(0.1%)	(6,703)	(0.2%)
Other Hispanic or Latino	(124)	(0.8%)	(147,503)	(5.2%)
Not Hispanic or Latino	16,167	97.9%	1,970,710	69.2%
White alone	15,580	94.4%	1,458,978	51.3%
Total	16,507	100%	2,846,289	100%

Source: US Census, 2000



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B. Employment

An estimated 1,740 people are employed within the City of Laguna Woods. The five largest employers in the City, which account for approximately 72.4% of total employment opportunities, are listed in Table H-4. Based on survey results², an estimated 1,414 or 75.5% of those employed in the City of Laguna Woods are included within the retail service category. Another 119 are counted as Accommodation and Food Services at 6.8% of the employment sector, and Health Care and Social Assistance at 56 or 3.2% of the workforce. No data is available for place of residence for those employed in the City.

Table H - 4: Five Largest Employers in City of Laguna Woods

Employer	Number of Employees
Long's Drugs	50
Von's Companies, Inc.	70
PCM	1,000
The Home Depot	75
Stater Brothers Markets, Inc.	65
Total	1,260

Source: Survey Results

Jobs/Housing Balance

The jobs-housing balance is represented by the ratio of the number of jobs in a community to the number of dwelling units in the community. The jobs-housing ratio is intended as a measure of the extent to which a community provides housing in quantities sufficient to house those employed in the area.

The Southern California Association of Governments offers a target jobs-housing ratio between 1.0 and 1.29 (i.e., there should be between 1.0 and 1.29 jobs for each dwelling unit in the community). In practice, achieving the target balance is no indication that most or even many individuals both live and work in the community. Significant numbers of residents from housing-rich communities in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, for example, commute to jobs in jobs-rich communities throughout southern Orange County.

The jobs-housing balance for the City of Laguna Woods is 0.13 (1,740 jobs/13,252)³ dwelling units, indicating a clearly housing-rich community. This reflects the fact that

² Phone survey conducted by Hogle-Ireland, Inc. week of October 15, 2001.

³ Dwelling unit count based on data provided by PCM for Leisure World, and from City Building Department files for the remaining three residential communities. 13,252 is the official City unit count figure. The figure initial provided by the 2000 Census was 12,650.



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the City of Laguna Woods was developed consistent with the "Rossmoor Leisure World Planned Community"⁴ as a retirement community; land not designated for open space or residential use was developed for retail goods and services uses for the convenience of residents of the planned community. With low rates of participation in the workforce, access to jobs was not a significant consideration in the design and development of the community.

Up to 575 additional jobs may result from future development of up to 208,000 square feet of retail and office space. This development will represent complete build-out of all non-residential parcels in the City of Laguna Woods. Of this potential development, no more than 100,000 square feet are projected for construction during the planning term of the Housing Element. This level of development may result in an additional 290 jobs by the year 2005.

Most of the anticipated new jobs are likely to be in the relatively low-paying retail service sector, and many positions may be less than fulltime. Many of these future jobs, however, may be well suited for residents of Leisure World who choose to remain in the labor force on a part-time basis. For example, of the 15% of City of Laguna Woods residents estimated to be in the labor force, many are part-time employees of Professional Community Management (PCM) in Leisure World.

A continuing shortage of qualified personnel in the service sector, high turnover rates of younger workers, and the desire of some active seniors to supplement their incomes may ultimately increase labor force participation of City of Laguna Woods' residents commensurate with creation of nearby, part-time job opportunities. Even with new employment opportunities in the City, however, the City of Laguna Woods will remain a housing-rich community according to the target jobs-housing ratio.

C. Household Characteristics

Assessment of present and future housing needs begins with consideration of the demographic characteristics of current residents. The basic unit for this demographic analysis is the "household". In this sense, a household includes all the persons occupying a housing unit and may be comprised of a family related by blood or marriage, a single individual, or a group of unrelated persons including roommates, unmarried couples, or an individual or individuals with a live-in caregiver.

Household Composition

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are 11,699 households within the City of Laguna Woods. As the City was not incorporated until 1999, comparable household

⁴ Zoning document administered by the County of Orange prior to incorporation of the City of Laguna Woods.



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data from the 1990 Census is not available. However, only one new housing unit has been constructed since 1984 and it is assumed that the number of households has not changed significantly over this period of time. In comparison, the number of households in Orange County has increased from 827,066 in 1990 to 935,287 households in 2000.

The 2000 Census indicates an average household size in the City of Laguna Woods of 1.4 persons. By contrast, the average household size in Orange County in 1990 was 2.87 persons and rose to 3 persons per household by 2000.

Single-person households comprise approximately 58% of all City of Laguna Woods' households. Thirty-two percent (32%) are two-person households and include those composed of husband and wife families, or a principal occupant and an unrelated, live-in caregiver. The balance (10%) of households are comprised of three or more people.

Given that all existing housing in the City of Laguna Woods is age-restricted, changes in mortality rates will likely have the greatest effect on household size. As the average lifespan of males approaches parity with that of females, a slight increase in average household size may be expected in the next decade.

Household Income

Estimates of current household incomes are derived from the United States 2000 Census. The median household income for the City of Laguna Woods in 2000 is estimated to be approximately \$30,493. In comparison, the median household income for Orange County was estimated at \$58,820

Table H - 5: Household Income⁵

Households	11,482
Less than \$10,000	1,158
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1,084
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2,549
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,660
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,806
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,611
\$75,000 to \$99,999	686
\$100,000 to \$149,999	604
\$150,000 to \$199,999	194
\$200,000 or more	130
Laguna Woods Median Household Income	\$30,493

⁵ The 11,482 figure in this table is Summary File Sample Data. The 11,699 Occupied figure used in this document comes from 100-Percent Data most commonly identified by the 2000 Census.



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The apparent difference in median household incomes between the City of Laguna Woods and the overall County is expected. Household incomes in the City are primarily comprised of non-wage income including Social Security payments, pension proceeds, and the proceeds of other retirement investments. Moreover, these non-wage sources are often not considered as income by respondents to questionnaires that are used in compiling survey data.

Although median household income is usually suggestive of the relative magnitude of housing needs of a community, the unique demographics of the City of Laguna Woods require that this factor be tempered by other, equally significant data. 2000 Census data, for example, indicates that approximately 48% of owner-occupied households are without mortgage debt. Many households likely used equity from sales of principal, pre-retirement residences for all-cash purchases. A significant number of other households likely used this equity for substantial down payments. In both scenarios, housing expenses are relatively small even as a share of lower retirement incomes.

Housing Tenure

Of the 11,699 occupied dwelling units, 9,929 or 84.9% of occupied housing units in the City of Laguna Woods were owner-occupied compared with 61.4% of occupied units within Orange County. The remaining 1,770 occupied housing units, or 15.1%, were renter occupied. Countywide, 38.6% of all occupied units were renter-occupied.

Vacancy Rates

The vacancy rate is a measure of the general availability of housing in the City. A low vacancy rate suggests that households may have more difficulty finding housing within their price range. A high vacancy rate indicates an oversupply of housing units within at least some price ranges.

The availability of vacant housing units provides households with choices on different unit types to accommodate changing needs (i.e., divorce, children leaving home, births). A low vacancy rate tends to increase rents and housing prices, consequently limiting the housing options for some households.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) prepared by Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) in 1999 identifies a target vacancy rate of 3.1% for its member jurisdictions. A vacancy rate between 3% and 5% is considered normal. The higher rate allows adequate time between occupancies for routine or deferred maintenance of rental units, and tends to moderate rent increases, while tempering a rise in overall housing costs including the price of *for-sale* units.



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The 2000 Census indicated an overall vacancy rate of 5% for the City of Laguna Woods. This vacancy rate is expected to decline in following years due to increases in average life expectancy, significant growth in the senior population as the "baby boom" generation ages, and because of the limited developable land.

D. Housing Inventory

The number of housing units in the City (13,252) has not changed since the most recently constructed units were completed in the late 80's. In contrast, the County's housing stock increased by 108,221 units between 1990 and 1999, an increase of 13.1%.

Table H - 6: Housing Units By Type

Housing Unit Type	Number of Units	Percent of Total
Single-Family Detached	426	3.2%
Multi-Family (2-4 units)	4,179	31.5%
Multi-Family (5+units)	8,647	65.3%
City Total	13,252	100.0%

Source: City of Laguna Woods General Plan

Multi-family dwellings with 5 or more housing units comprise 65.3% of housing units in the City of Laguna Woods. Multi-family dwellings consisting of 2-4 units comprise 31.5% of housing units and single-family detached units represent 3.2% of housing units within the City.

Residential Densities

Residential uses in the City of Laguna Woods have been developed at an average density of 8.8 units per acre. Table H-7 identifies the number of acres developed at each of the three residential densities in the City.

Table H - 7: Existing Residential Density

	Acres
Low Density - Less Than 10 Dwelling Units per Acre	680
Medium Density - 10-13 Dwelling Units per Acre	798
High Density - 13-35 Dwelling Units per Acre	27

Source: City of Laguna Woods General Plan

Residential Communities in City of Laguna Woods

The City of Laguna Woods is unique in that it is predominantly age-restricted for adults 55 years and older. Of the 13,252 dwellings units in the City, 12,736 are



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located in the gated community of Leisure World, 140 units in *The Fountains*, 184 in *Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace*, and 192 in *Renaissance at the Regency*. The various housing options, levels of amenities, and services provided at each community are described below.

Leisure World

Leisure World contains 12,736 owned condominium and cooperative units. Owners within Leisure World pay a homeowners' association fee that is used to provide residents with public transportation, patrolled private security, clubhouses with special programs and recreational activities. Also included within the Leisure World community are two golf courses for the private use of Leisure World residents.

Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace

Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace is a licensed residential care community with 184 rental units. Services include the dispensing of medication, assistance with bathing, dressing, and other activities of daily living determined by a care plan tailored to specifically meet the individual needs of the residents. Amenities include meal service, transportation, housekeeping, laundry services, and access to recreational facilities including a putting green, shuffleboard court, pool, and spa. Activity programs include regular trips to shopping locations, restaurants, concerts, and historical landmarks.

Renaissance at the Regency

Renaissance at the Regency consists of 192 rental units for seniors and offers both independent and assisted-living on a month-to-month basis. Services and amenities at Renaissance at the Regency include daily meals, housekeeping, laundry services for bed and bath linens, scheduled transportation, group excursions, and social events. The Regency is the only residential community, which under unique circumstances will accommodate an individual with assisted living that is under the age of fifty-five years old.

The Fountains

The Fountains contains 140 rental units and is the only independent living apartment facility in the City. Although age-restricted, The Fountains operates as an apartment community and does not provide assisted living services, special programs or amenities.

Age of Housing Stock

Age of dwellings is one measure of housing stock conditions and a factor for determining the need for moderate or substantial rehabilitation. Without proper maintenance, housing units deteriorate over time. Older units, even when properly



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maintained, require periodic major repairs including new roofing and plumbing. Dwellings more than 30 years old are generally considered to fall into this category. Older units may also require significant upgrades to prevent loss from fire and earthquakes.

The first dwellings in the City of Laguna Woods were constructed in 1964. More than half of all units (60%) in the City were constructed between 1964 and 1970. The age distribution of housing units is shown in Table H-8.

Table H - 8: Age of Housing Stock

Year Built	Number of Units	Percent of Units
1964-1970	8,025	60.55%
1971-1975	3,327	25.10%
1976-1980	1,381	10.42%
1981-Present	519	3.93%
TOTAL	13,252	100%

Source: Professional Community Management

All Leisure World units, whether cooperative or condominium ownership, are included within one of the three mutual benefit corporations, or "mutuals." Each of the three mutuals is organized as a nonprofit corporation to manage, operate, and maintain dwellings included within the respective mutual.

Funded by monthly "carrying" charges paid by homeowners, the mutuals contract with Professional Community Management to administer maintenance and repair contracts and supervise staffing necessary to properly maintain the buildings and common areas of each of the mutuals. Reserve funds maintained by each mutual have allowed for scheduled replacement of major building components as these have failed.

For those living in cooperatives in the United Mutual, monthly carrying charges pay not only for common area and building maintenance, but also for replacement of major appliances, minor carpentry, plumbing, and electrical repairs within the units.

With professional management and the uniformity and regularity of building maintenance within the three mutuals in Leisure World, all units are in an average or better than average state of repair. None are classified as "substandard" or "in need of substantial rehabilitation".

Visual inspections of the Fountains apartment community, of Renaissance at the Regency, and of Alterra Wynwood revealed no evidence of deteriorated or substandard



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living conditions. Conversation with a City Building Inspector confirmed these observations.

E. Housing Affordability Analysis

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing costs as contract rents or mortgage payments, including taxes and insurance, but not utilities, that are equal to or less than 30% of the gross income of very low, low, and moderate income households.

For purposes of determining housing affordability, the California Department of Housing and Community Development consistent with HUD guidelines, establishes income ranges that define very low-income, low-income, and moderate-income households (Table H-9). In general, very low-income households are those with incomes less than 50% of the County median household income; low-income households are those with incomes of 50% to less than 80% of the County median household income; moderate-income households are those with incomes of 80% to 120% of County household median income. Adjustments are made for family size and, in high-income areas such as Orange County; the upper income limit for low-income households is subject to a national cap of \$52,500 for a family of four.

Table H - 9: Annual Income Limit by Household Size

	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person
Very-Low Income	\$25,800	\$29,500	\$33,150	\$36,850	\$39,800
Low Income	\$36,750	\$42,000	\$47,250	\$52,500	\$56,700
Moderate Income	\$61,900	\$70,750	\$79,600	\$88,450	\$95,550

Source: California Department of Housing and Community Development

The income limits provided in Table H-9 are used in the analysis of affordability of existing units in the City of Laguna Woods. The analysis includes both owner and renter-occupied units representative of those offered for sale or rent during 2001.

Characteristics of Market-Rate Dwelling Units

Affordability of housing in the City of Laguna Woods must be considered in the context of its origin as a planned community built for seniors. Ownership and occupancy include access to a broad range of services and amenities for residents which need to be considered in the analysis of affordability of units offered for-sale and for-rent in the City of Laguna Woods.

The vast majority of housing in the City of Laguna Woods was built as part of Leisure World. All units in Leisure World are held either in cooperative or condominium



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ownership. The governing entities of both the cooperatives and the condominium units are corporations organized under the general non-profit corporation law of the State of California. The respective units and governing entities are collectively referred to as "Mutuals".

The United Mutual (cooperative) owns all of the real property (dwelling units, carports and laundries) within the boundaries of the Mutual, and each member of the cooperative is entitled to occupy a specific dwelling unit under the terms of an Occupancy Agreement. Members pay a monthly assessment that is based on their respective shares of the corporation's mortgage payments, property taxes, maintenance and other operating expenses as determined by the board of directors of the Mutual.

In addition to exterior maintenance, the carrying charges of the United Mutual cooperatives pay for major appliance repair and replacement, and electrical, plumbing, and carpentry repairs. Out-of-pocket expenses required of the resident owners are significantly lower than in other owner-occupied housing since many typical home improvements are included as part of those carrying charges and do not result in additional expenses to the owners.

Owners in the Third Mutual and 50th Mutual (condominium associations) own undivided interests in the defined common area of the real property of the respective condominiums. Each owner owns the air space of a specific dwelling unit defined by the inner surfaces of walls, ceilings, and floors of the respective unit.

Condominium unit owners pay a monthly carrying charge in an amount determined by the respective boards of directors of each mutual. In addition to payment of property taxes and insurance for common areas, the carrying charges pay for maintenance of common areas including building exteriors. Each owner is responsible for property taxes, insurance, and interior maintenance associated with his or her unit

Affordability of For-Sale Dwelling Units

Recent representative resale prices for dwellings in the City of Laguna Woods range from \$43,000 for a one-bedroom cooperative unit to \$605,000 for the largest condominium unit (Table H-10). The median selling price in the City of Laguna Woods was \$129,333 compared to \$269,000 countywide⁶.

Table H - 10: Dwelling Unit Sales Prices

Unit Type	Bedrooms	Lowest Price	Highest Price	Median Price
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⁶California Association of Realtors, April, 2001



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Cooperative	One	\$43,000	\$112,000	\$92,000
	Two	\$57,000	\$220,000	
Attached/Detached Condominium	One	\$45,000	\$193,000	\$151,000
	Two	\$73,000	\$545,000	
	Three	\$139,000	\$605,000	
High-Rise Condominium	Studio	\$10,000	\$19,000	\$145,000
	One	\$45,000	\$165,000	
	Two	\$150,000	\$290,000	
	Three	\$500,000	\$500,000	

Source: Leisure World Resales, 04/01/00 to 03/31/01

The resale values are used to illustrate calculations necessary to defining affordability of for-sale units in the City of Laguna Woods. The example is based on the median-priced cooperative, condominium, and high-rise condominium units. Housing expenses include the required payment of principal and interest on mortgage debt, an assumed 1.25% allocation for taxes and homeowner insurance, and the respective monthly homeowners association fee (carrying charge). A 20% down payment and a 7% interest rate are assumed, generally reflecting market conditions in 2001.

Table H - 11: Owner-Occupied Housing Expenses

	Cooperative	Attached/Detached Condominium	High-Rise Condominium
Median Purchase Price	\$92,000	\$151,000	\$145,000
Down Payment	20%	20%	20%
Interest Rate	7%	7%	7%
Loan Amount	\$73,600	\$120,800	\$116,000
Monthly Principal and Interest	\$490	\$804	\$772
Monthly HOA ² Fee	\$425 ³	\$360 ⁴	\$1,200 ⁵
Total Monthly housing Expense	\$915	\$1,321	\$2,153
Required Monthly Income ⁶	\$3,050	\$4,403	\$7,177



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Monthly Private Mortgage Insurance and Property Tax ¹	Included in HOA	\$157	\$181
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1 Annual PMI and property tax assumed to be 1.25% of purchase price.

2 Homeowner's Association

3 Includes principal and interest on master mortgage, building exterior and common area maintenance, property taxes, major appliance repair and replacement and most plumbing, electrical, and carpentry repairs on unit interiors.

4 Includes building exterior and common area maintenance.

5 Includes building exterior and common area maintenance, housekeeping services, and meal service.

6 Assumes expenditure of no more than 30% of income on housing expenses.

Note that the monthly homeowners association fee represents a significant portion of monthly housing expense. In each case, the association fee covers not only the customary maintenance and insurance costs for common areas, but also the added services available to Leisure World residents including transportation and recreation services; in the high-rise condominium unit, this monthly fee includes housekeeping and meal service.

The same data sources and assumptions used in the example of median-priced units were used to determine affordability of for-sale units to very low and low-income households. The household income ranges at each level are those from Table H-8. Based on this analysis, the numbers of units affordable to prospective City of Laguna Woods residents are shown in Table H-12. The household sizes used in this analysis reflect age and occupancy restrictions on all units in the example.

Table H - 12: Affordability of Units Sold 2000-2001*



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	Income Level	Annual Income	Affordable Unit Price	Units Sold in This Price Range	% of Units Sold
Single-Person Households	Very Low	Up to \$25,800	Up to \$41,250	None	0%
	Low	\$25,800-\$36,750	Up to \$78,535	159	12%
Two-Person Households	Very Low	Up to \$29,500	Up to \$59,558	40	3%
	Low	\$29,500-\$42,000	Up to \$103,336	384	30%

*1,276 total units sold April, 2000 to April, 2001

Housing affordability estimates for the City of Laguna Woods need to be viewed in the proper context: homeownership levels are highest among those aged 55 and over. Assets accumulated over a lifetime often include equity in a previous residence. These assets are used as down payments substantially larger than the 20% used in this analysis, resulting in significantly reduced principal and interest payment. Estimates derived from Census data indicate up to 40% of transactions are all-cash purchases. Income levels, therefore, are less of a determinant in affordability analyses applied to seniors housing. Based on unit value, Table H-13 summarizes the cost characteristics of home ownership in Laguna Woods.

Table H - 13: Home Owner Cost Characteristics⁷

⁷ The 9,747 figure in this table is Summary File Sample Data. The 9,929 Owner Occupied figure used in this document comes from 100-Percent Data most commonly identified by the 2000 Census.



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Affordability of For-Rent Dwelling Units

A significant number of for-rent units in the City of Laguna Woods are in assisted living communities. For purposes of assessing affordability of renter-occupied units, the distinction between typical rental housing and assisted living rental housing is important to note. In a conventional rental situation, a dwelling unit is provided to a tenant in exchange for monthly rent; in assisted living rental housing, amenities such as meals, medical assistance, housekeeping, transportation, and various activity programs are included with the unit.

Owner Occupied Housing Units	9,747
Less than \$10,000	0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	9
\$15,000 to \$19,999	40
\$20,000 to \$24,999	33
\$25,000 to \$29,999	48
\$30,000 to \$34,999	31
\$35,000 to \$39,999	32
\$40,000 to \$49,999	203
\$50,000 to \$59,999	573
\$60,000 to \$69,999	701
\$70,000 to \$79,999	1,293
\$80,000 to \$89,999	1,351
\$90,000 to \$99,999	869
\$100,000 to \$124,999	1,178
\$125,000 to \$149,999	975
\$150,000 to \$174,999	749
\$175,000 to \$199,999	337
\$200,000 to \$249,999	387
\$250,000 to \$299,999	338
\$300,000 to \$399,999	408
\$400,000 to \$499,999	123
\$500,000 to \$749,999	48
\$750,000 to \$999,999	0
\$1,000,000 or more	21

Source: 2000 Census

Rental rates for typical rental units were taken from the classified advertisements in the Leisure World News between August 2, 2001 and November 22, 2001. The average rental rate for a one-bedroom unit was \$995. Two-bedroom units averaged \$1,202 per month. Monthly rents for units in the two assisted living facilities outside



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Leisure World, *Wynwood at Palm Terrace*, and *Renaissance at the Regency*, range from \$2,770 for a one-bedroom unit to \$3,530 for a two-bedroom unit.

Table H-14 shows the affordability of the average one and two-bedroom, non-assisted rentals for each income group using income limits in Table H-8. Table H-15 provides cost characteristics for rental units experienced by renters in Laguna Woods.

Table H - 14: Affordability of Rental Units

	Income Level	Affordable Rent (Maximum)	One- Bedroom Affordability Average *	Two-Bedroom Affordability Average **
Single-Person Households	Very Low	\$645	Non Affordable	Non Affordable
	Low	\$918	Non Affordable	Non Affordable
	Moderate	\$1,547	Affordable	Affordable
Two-Person Households	Very Low	\$737	Non Affordable	Non Affordable
	Low	\$1,050	Affordable	Non Affordable
	Moderate	\$1,768	Affordable	Affordable

* Rent @ \$995/month

** Rent @ \$1,202/month

Table H - 15: Renter Cost Characteristics



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Source: 2000 Census

Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,770
GROSS RENT	
Less than \$200	0
\$200 to \$299	7
\$300 to \$499	106
\$500 to \$749	242
\$750 to \$999	421
\$1,000 to \$1,499	342
\$1,500 or more	449
No cash rent	203
Median Rent	1,036

F. Housing Needs

Regional Housing Needs Assessment

In accordance with State Housing law, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has prepared a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) that quantifies the need for housing in each jurisdiction in the SCAG region between 1998 and 2005. The RHNA provides estimates of existing and future housing needs. The existing need is determined from information about current residents including the number of low-income families paying more than 30% of income for housing; future need is based on projected growth in the number of households and the number of units needed to maintain a target vacancy rate.

Because the City of Laguna Woods was not incorporated at the time the Regional Housing Needs Assessment was prepared, no data for existing housing needs was provided by SCAG. The future housing need in the City of Laguna Woods is indicated as the number of new dwelling units that should be constructed by the year 2005 for new households at each of four income levels. This allocation for new construction of 113 units in the City of Laguna Woods is indicated in Table H-16. State law requiring that new, affordable housing not be concentrated in existing low-income neighborhoods also guides the geographic distribution of RHNA dwelling units.

Table H - 16: Total Construction Need By Income 2003-2008



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Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
20	15	25	53	113
18%	13%	22%	47%	100%

Source: Southern California Association of Governments

Overcrowding

The Census defines overcrowded housing units as "those in excess of one person per room average." Overcrowding is often reflective of insufficient income to secure housing with an appropriate number of rooms.

The 2000 U.S. Census indicated that in the City of Laguna Woods, owner-occupied units average 1.42 persons per household; renter-occupied units have fewer people on average, with 1.31 persons per dwelling unit.

The City of Laguna Woods has an average household size smaller than most cities due to the restrictions placed on occupancy of all existing units. The Conditions, Covenants & Restrictions for the Leisure World community limit the numbers of persons who may occupy a dwelling based on the number of bedrooms in the respective unit. Similar restrictions apply to occupancy at each of the other three residential communities in the City of Laguna Woods. With these privately imposed and enforced conditions, overcrowding is not a problem in the City.

Overpayment

Affordable housing costs with respect to lower income households shall not exceed 30% of gross household income. That is, when households must spend more than 30% of their respective incomes for rent or mortgage payments, sufficient funds may not be available for other necessities, such as food, health care, and clothing.

The affordability standards apply to lower income households (those, at or below 80 percent of the area median income). Deterioration of housing stock is also associated with overpayment for housing. Expenditures for routine maintenance may be deferred in order to meet immediate expenses for other necessities such as food, clothing, medical care, and utilities. Overpayment also promotes overcrowding, which leads to a variety of problems from an acceleration in building deterioration to related code violations.

Data related to overpaying is an indicator of housing need for current residents of the City. Table H-17 indicates the numbers of lower income households paying more than



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30% of their incomes. Of those low-income renters approximately 1,255, or 74.6% are overpaying. In the lower income category of homeowners 34.08% are estimated to be over paying under the thirty-percent standard.

Table H - 17: Lower Income Households Overpaying for Housing

Household Tenure	Lower Income	Total Over Paying	Percentage Over Paying
Renter Households	1,682	1,255	74.6%
Owner Households	3,412	1,163	34.08%
Total	5,094	2,418	47.47%

Source: 2000 Census

Community Goals, Policies and Quantified Objectives

Laguna Woods' housing goals are outlined in the Policy Document within the adopted Laguna Woods General plan and within this Element. Policies and implementation programs to provide greater housing opportunities include re-designation of land from Opens Space to Urban Activates Center, a mixed-use designation that allows residential development, and designation of Open Space to a High Density Residential category.

The General Plan policy to rezone property from Open Space to High Density Residential has commenced and will be completed early in year one of the planning periods established for this Housing Element. This rezoning to accommodate affordable housing and achieve the City's goal for new construction of 113 residential units will satisfy the City's responsibility under the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. The policy and implementation will be carried out by the Laguna Woods Community Development Department and City Council.

At Risk Units

State Housing Law requires an inventory and analysis of government-assisted dwellings units eligible for conversion from lower-income housing to market rate housing during the next ten years. Reasons for this conversion may include expiration of subsidies, mortgage prepayments or pay-offs, and concurrent expiration of affordability restrictions.



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A review of the assisted housing inventory maintained by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development indicate that no assisted units subject to expiration of affordability restrictions are located within the City of Laguna Woods. Consequently, no analysis of costs and programs for preserving such units is required. Table H-18, summarizes the number of housing units by income category that could be constructed, rehabilitated, and conserved over a five-year time period. In addition, the City will assist, within the context of the Objectives established in this Element, any property owner who wishes to rehabilitate units for purposes of affordable housing. As a goal of such rehabilitation over the five year planning period is twenty (20) units per income group as identified with an asterisk (*) in the table below.

Table H - 18: Units Constructed, Rehabilitated & Conserved

Income Group	New Construction	Rehabilitation	Conservation
Very Low	20	20*	14
Low	15	20*	14
Moderate	25	20*	0
Above Moderate	53	0	0
Total	113	60*	14

Special Needs Groups

State Housing Law requires that the special needs of certain disadvantaged groups be addressed. These households typically experience difficulty in securing decent, affordable housing, and are not well guarded under market conditions. Special needs groups include the elderly, homeless, large families, and disabled persons.

Elderly

With more than 86% of the population over 65 years of age, the elderly are the largest special needs group in the City of Laguna Woods. Affordable housing has been identified by South County Senior Services as the primary need for the elderly; health care and in-home care and transportation services needs were also indicated.

Significant resources for the elderly exist in and near the City of Laguna Woods and include:

- Florence Sylvester Memorial Senior Center; offers a nutrition program, congregate meals, home delivery of meals, social services case management, seniors activities, information, and referral services;



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- ❑ Home Helping Hands; program sponsored by Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County maintains registry of in-home care providers;
- ❑ Orange County Housing Authority; provides "Section 8" rental vouchers provided through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for low-income seniors; and
- ❑ South County Senior Services Center; provides adult day-care program, meals-on-wheels for shut-ins, paratransit services, and various activity and learning programs.

Homeless

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) produced by SCAG defines homeless people as "persons who are living or staying in emergency shelters; persons who sleep outside, in makeshift shelter, in cars or transportation areas such as bus or train terminals; or persons who are considered *at risk*."

In the past, several factors have contributed to homelessness including difficulty in obtaining employment, lack of on-going care for the mentally ill, substance abuse, and inadequate education. In recent years, however, a shortage of affordable housing opportunities coincident with a growing population of low-income renters has added to the problem.

Community Care facilities, which include transitional shelter care facilities/emergency-shelters for six or fewer persons, are permitted in Laguna Woods in any district, planned community, or specific plan area zoned for residential uses. The state of California is the authority for licensing, inspection, and enforcement for community care facilities throughout the state. The state has preempted local controls over certain types of facilities in that twenty-four (24) hour occupancy by six or fewer persons in a residential facility allows the facility to be considered a residential use.

The County of Orange "2002-2004 Consolidated Plan" (Orange County Department of Housing and Community Development) indicates 18,604 homeless persons in Orange County. In response to this problem, Orange County developed and contributes funding to the Continuum of Care. The Continuum of Care is a housing and service delivery system for the homeless. The Orange County Community Forum, the Orange County Leadership Cabinet, and the Orange County Department of Housing and Community Development share responsibility for planning and implementing this program.

In response to the continuing need for additional facilities for the homeless, the County of Orange through the Continuum of Care Community Forum has established the following goals:



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- Secure Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance grant funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Identify and coordinate additional resources to address gaps in components of the regional Continuum of Care that are not eligible for Continuum of Care grant funding;
- Ensure project sponsors implement activities within time frames;
- Provide outreach and assessment and prevention services for individuals and families, and connect families to appropriate facilities and services;
- Provide emergency shelter facilities and programs that serve as a safe and decent alternative to living on the streets;
- Create a minimum of 60 new transitional housing beds County-wide;
- Provide a minimum of 59 new permanent supportive housing units for homeless persons with special needs as the last step toward self-sufficiency in the Continuum of Care system;
- Create a minimum of 946 service slots County-wide for homeless populations identified with priority needs;
- Ensure the community-based method devised to create the Continuum of Care system is sustained beyond the application process, and to provide services in a manner sensitive to cultural diversity among Orange County homeless;
- Increase technical assistance for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grant project sponsors to ensure appropriate implementation of projects, timely use of federal funds, submission of Department of Housing and Urban Development annual performance reports, increased resource leveraging, and coordination with mainstream resources;
- Improve regional coordination of services to minimize duplication and facilitate better utilization of resources; and
- Provide grassroots advocacy efforts to ensure additional resources are targeted to fill gaps in the system of care and to effect systematic change to overcome barriers to shelter/housing development.

Large Families

Large family households may require special consideration because of their need for larger dwellings with four or more bedrooms to avoid overcrowding. Family households with five or more persons, however, often face additional limitations because of a lower family per capita income.

According to the 2000 Census, the City of Laguna Woods has an average household size of 1.4 persons and an average family household size of 2.06 persons. Large families, therefore, do not represent an unmet housing need in the City.

Disabled Persons



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The City of Laguna Woods consists predominantly of a senior population, those who live here, or those who are planning to live in the City, do so because they know many of their needs will be by local organizations and services. The City recognizes that the disabled have special needs with regard to location, and that housing needs to be located near public facilities, especially public transportation which provides service to those who rely on it the most.

According to the University of California, Irvine "On-Going Survey of Leisure World", there are approximately 3,300 residents in the City of Laguna Woods with mobility or self-care limitations. The 2000 Census has identified 6,115 persons with a disability. Of these 6,115 persons, many were identified to have more than one disability. The types of disabilities recognized by the 2000 census are listed below.

Table H - 19: Types of Disabilities

Total Disabilities Tallied	
Total Disabilities tallied for people 5 to 15 years:	0
Sensory Disability	69
Physical Disability	253
Mental Disability	49
Self-care Disability	45
Go-outside-home Disability	151
Employment Disability	360
Total Disabilities tallied for people 16 to 64 years:	927
Sensory Disability	2,012
Physical Disability	3,759
Mental Disability	1,425
Self-care Disability	1,086
Go-outside-home Disability	2,393
Total Disabilities tallied for people 65 and older:	10,675

Source: 2000 Census

The two major housing needs of persons with disabilities are affordability and access. Access is particularly important, as physically disabled persons often require specially designed dwelling units to permit access within the units, as well as to and from the unit. California Administrative Code Title 24 establishes requirements for access and adaptability for the physically handicapped including access ramps, larger door widths, and restroom modifications. These regulations apply to new construction including apartment housing containing five or more units. Because the City has a predominant senior population, many with disabilities, there are established



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procedures for reviewing and approving plans that involve retrofitting of ramps, elevator lifts and other accessories that benefit and aid the physically disabled.

The City of Laguna Woods is committed to facilitating and circulating information about services. To this end the City of Laguna Woods works with public and private organizations to disseminate information regarding a variety of service providers to citizens with disabilities. Some of these organizations are listed on the following pages.

Care Services:

Florence Sylvester Memorial Senior Center offers a nutrition program, congregate meals, home delivery of meals, social services case management, seniors activities, information, and referral services;

Home Helping Hands program sponsored by Volunteer Center of Greater Orange County maintains registry of in-home care providers;

South County Senior Services Center provides adult day-care program, meals-on-wheels for shut-ins, paratransit services, and various activity and learning programs.

Public Transportation Services:

ACCESS ADA Service is the complementary paratransit service for OCTA fixed routes. Passengers are certified as eligible under criteria set forth by the ADA. Service is available on a subscription and advanced reservation basis;

Group Service is an advanced reservation service for groups of eight or more people going to a common destination not served by the special agency services or AAA senior nutrition program;

Medical Back-up Service provides service to ADA-certified individuals for unplanned medical trips that could not be booked in advance on OCTA ACCESS service. This service is provided at a premium fare on a same-day reservation basis;

Special Agency Services are provided under agreement with the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) to provide transportation services for school or program related trips.

Private Transportation Services:



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Leisure World Lift Bus consists of two shuttle-type buses equipped with lifts for residents who cannot use the regular fixed route buses due to a disability. Passengers can make reservations up to three days in advance with service available seven days a week from 8:00 AM – 10:45 PM.

South County Senior Services is a not-for-profit organization, which provides a full range of social services to seniors in south Orange County. The agency has a fleet of shuttle buses that are operated under contract to medical providers and social service groups.

Rossmoor Regency/Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace

In addition to Leisure World, residential facilities within Laguna Woods also provide shuttle service to their residents. These include the independent and assisted care facilities of Rossmoor Regency and Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace. Service is typically demand responsive and no fare is charged.

Saddleback Hospital

Saddleback Hospital provides transportation through home caregivers and a variety of therapy departments. Patients are driven in the caregiver's personal car and are charged \$0.40 per mile.

Constraints on Housing for persons with Disabilities

The City of Laguna Woods is unique among cities primarily because of its predominant senior population. In recognizing this, the City is proactive in accommodating persons with disabilities when considering all types of development, including residential uses that may require unique designs or expeditious permitting. California Title 24 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards are fully employed through zoning code development standards, during design and construction plan review and inspection.

Examples of the City's efforts to further the development of housing for persons with disabilities include development standards to create building pad elevations and their pedestrian access points at grades less than five-percent; and the City commonly reviews and expedites several permits for ADA retrofit all at once, such as elevator lifts in residential units.

The zoning code currently allows, subject to a use permit, congregate care homes to be constructed in any district or specific plan area zoned for either multifamily residential or for hotel uses.

There are two care facilities now operating within the City. Alterra Wynwood at Palm Terrace is a licensed residential care community with 184 rental units. Rossmoor Regency consists of 192 rental units for seniors and offers assisted living services including daily meals, housekeeping, laundry services, transportation, and social events.



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Farm Workers

Farm workers have special housing needs coincident with low wages and the itinerant nature of their work. No relevant data from the 2000 Census is available as of this writing; however, given the demographic composition of the City of Laguna Woods, it is unlikely that any farm workers or their families live in the City.

G. Constraints to Development of Affordable Housing

Governmental Constraints

This section of the Housing Element addresses actual and potential City governmental constraints on development of housing for all income levels. Such constraints may include land use controls (zoning), minimum required site improvements, fees and local processing procedures.

State-mandated programs and standards, including the California Codes relating to building and safety standards, typically allow very limited local discretion in adopting and implementing provisions less restrictive than the State models. An analysis of State-mandated programs that may constrain housing development is included.

General Plan

Every city in California must prepare and adopt a General Plan that serves as the blueprint for its future physical development establishing policy guidelines for all development within a city. The Land Use Element of the General Plan identifies the location, distribution and density of land uses in the City. The City's zoning code is a primary tool for implementing the General Plan. The zoning code establishes more specific standards for development than the General Plan including those governing the uses of buildings and the conditions subject to which buildings may be occupied, and the overall sizes of buildings.

The City of Laguna Woods' General Plan includes six (6) land use designations: Urban Activities Center, Commercial, Low-Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High-Density Residential, and Open Space. Residential densities anticipated in the General Plan and to be implemented through the Zoning Ordinance are expressed as maximum numbers of dwelling units permitted per acre. Table H-20 identifies the City's residential categories and corresponding unit densities.



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Table H - 20: Residential Land Use Categories

Designation	Description	Max Density
Low Density Residential	Allows for the development of low-density detached and attached single-family and multi-family developments.	Less than 10 du/ac
Medium Density Residential	Allows for the development of medium density attached single-family dwellings as well as multi-family dwellings from 10-13 dwelling units per acre.	10-13 du/ac
High Density Residential	Allows for the development of the highest density attached single-family and multi-family dwellings. This designation will permit the construction of as many as 35 dwelling units per acre.	13-35 du/ac

Source: City of Laguna Woods General Plan, Land Use Element

Density is a critical factor in development of affordable housing. Low-density developments typically increase the cost of construction per unit. Higher density developments may reduce the land costs per unit and facilitate economies of scale in the construction of affordable units. Density bonuses offered by cities through zoning ordinances, consistent with State mandate, reduce the land costs per unit in return for affordability covenants on a specified number of the units.

Affordability is typically correlated with permitted density of development. The State Housing and Community Development Department has established the following criteria for maintaining affordability as a function of permissible unit densities:

- Very Low income – minimum 25 units per acre
- Low income – minimum 18 units per acre
- Moderate income – minimum 8 units per acre

The City's High-Density Residential designation (13-35 du/ac) provides the opportunity for affordable housing development consistent with these criteria.



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Zoning Code

The Zoning Code includes limits on building density, height, and other requirements that affect ultimate development of a site. Differences in development standards can affect the relative affordability of dwellings among adjoining communities. As such, representative development standards for the City of Laguna Woods are compared and contrasted with those of nearby cities as indicated in the following table.

Table H - 21: Selected High-Density Zoning Standards

	Laguna Woods	Lake Forest	Laguna Hills	Laguna Niguel
Density	1 unit/ 1,000 Sq. Ft. of land net land area	43 du/ac	30 du/ac	Case-by-case with use permit
Lot Coverage	50%	Case-by-case with use permit	40%	Case-by-case with use permit
Parking	1.5 spaces/1 BR unit; One space must be covered	1 space per unit + 0.2 space guest parking	1.5 spaces/1 BR unit; 2.5 spaces/ 2BR unit + 0.2 space guest parking. One space must be covered	1.5 spaces/1BR unit; 2.5 spaces/2 BR unit. One space must be covered
Permit Required	Use Permit	Use Permit	Site Development Permit	Use Permit

Source: City Planning Departments

The data in the Table H-21 indicates that development standards for high-density residential developments in the City of Laguna Woods are consistent with those of nearby communities and with the general density guidelines for affordable housing of the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

Building Codes and Enforcement

Building codes regulate new construction, alteration, and reconstruction of buildings and are intended to protect occupants from unnecessary risk of fire, structural collapse, unsanitary conditions, and injury or loss of life. The City of Laguna Woods has adopted and enforces the California Codes including the 1997 editions of the California Building Code (Uniform Building Code as amended) and the Uniform Plumbing, Uniform Mechanical, Uniform Housing, and Uniform Administrative



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Codes as well as the National Electrical Code and Uniform Fire Code as enforced by the Orange County Fire Authority.

These Codes establish minimum construction standards for all residential buildings. Cities can adopt stricter standards, but may not impose less restrictive standards except in very limited circumstances after making mandatory findings for review and approval at the State level. Thus, the City is precluded from revising its allied Building Codes as a means of reducing construction costs.

Title 24 of the California Administrative Code mandates uniform energy conservation standards for new construction. Minimum energy conservation standards implemented through Title 24 may increase initial construction costs throughout the State, but reduce operating expenses and expenditure of natural resources over the long run.

Developer Fees and Exactions

Developer fees and exactions may be imposed on new development as a means to minimizing impacts on existing infrastructure and enabling required upgrades of infrastructure consistent with demands of the new development. State law requires that these fees be reasonably related to the mitigation of the identified impact, and that they be proportionate to the extent of impact associated with any given development project. These fees and exactions may add significantly to the cost of a housing unit.

Fees and exactions levied on new development in the City of Laguna Woods include those for the Moulton Parkway and Laguna Niguel thoroughfare, the San Joaquin Hills and Eastern Transportation Corridors, the Saddleback Valley Unified School District, and the Laguna Beach Unified School District (Table H-22). In each case, the fees imposed on development in the City of Laguna Woods are outside the control of, and cannot unilaterally be waived by, the City.



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Table H - 22: Comparison of Development Fees

	City of Laguna Woods	Lake Forest	Laguna Hills	Laguna Niguel
School District	\$2.05 per square foot	\$2.05 per square foot	\$2.05 per square foot	\$2.63 per square foot
SJHTC ¹ Multi-family	\$2,081	N/A	\$2,027	\$2,081
FETC ² Multi-family	\$2,285	\$2,285	\$2,285	N/A
Library	None	\$213	None	\$205
Fire Station	None	\$63	None	\$153
Traffic Signal	\$159.50	\$595.50	\$207	\$159.50
Road Improvement	\$987.50	\$4,398	\$604-\$1,371	\$987.50
Total³	\$5,513	\$7,554.50	\$5,506.50	\$3,622

¹San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor

²Foothill/Eastern Transportation Corridor

³Average total cost per unit. Does not include the school district fee

Source: City Planning Departments

Development Entitlement Processing

Development entitlement processing fees levied by cities for reviewing development applications may vary significantly from one to another although, by State law, such fees are to reflect the actual costs incurred by the city in carrying out this function. The time allotted for processing each entitlement may also vary from city to city and can significantly affect the carrying costs of the developer (i.e. land purchase option payments, legal fees, interest on pre-development loans, etc.).

Table H-23 identifies the various types of discretionary applications and a comparison of fees in the City of Laguna Woods and surrounding jurisdictions. As the table indicates, the planning processing fees are comparable in each of the cities surveyed.

Any entitlement applications necessitating environmental impact reports are processed in compliance with the shortest periods allowed for review and final action consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and the Permit Streamlining Act.



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Based on this review, there is no indication that the timeframe for processing of discretionary development applications is a hindrance to development of affordable housing in the City of Laguna Woods.

Table H - 23: Comparison of Processing Fees

Jurisdiction	General Plan Amendment	Zone Change	Parcel Map	Variance
Lake Forest	\$6,500*	\$5,500*	\$5,000*	\$5,500*
Laguna Hills	\$3,000*	\$3,000*	\$2,500*	\$2,500*
Laguna Niguel	\$5,000*	\$5,000*	\$980 (Review fee) + \$ 2,080	\$3,800*
Laguna Beach	\$1,210*	\$1,210*	\$690 + \$275/lot	\$180*
City of Laguna Woods	\$5,000*	\$2,000*	\$2,000*	\$2,000*
Orange County	\$5,000*	\$2,000*	\$2,000*	\$1,500*

* Deposit Based Fees Source: City / County Planning Departments

Note that the most costly discretionary applications, for General Plan Amendments, will not be a factor in affordable housing development in the City of Laguna Woods. The Land Use Plan of the General Plan includes a land use designation change and directs a zone change for property needed to accommodate future construction of affordable housing.

The time required to process a development entitlement application could have significant cost implications for affordable housing. Changes in zoning designations or standards may be typical of entitlement requests accompanying proposals for affordable housing. In the City of Laguna Woods, zone change requests can be accommodated in as few as 60 days if no environmental impact report is required. This timeframe reflects the minimum time necessary to prepare an application for final legislative action consistent with State planning and zoning and environmental statutes. This 60-day average is appreciably shorter than processing time incurred in comparable cities.



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Conditional use permits and subdivision parcel maps typically can be approved in six to eight weeks, provided an environmental impact report is not required. Decisions of the City Council, acting as Planning Commission, on parcel maps and conditional use permits are final.

Non-Governmental Constraints

Infill Development Potential

The vast majority of the residential property in the City of Laguna Woods is within the gated Leisure World community. This community is built-out consistent with the Rossmoor Leisure World Planned Community zoning administered by the County of Orange prior to incorporation of the City. Any proposal for adding residential units within the boundaries of any of the three existing mutuals would require a vote of unit owners to revise the respective governing documents to accommodate such a proposal. Because of the legal and administrative costs involved, residential infill development within Leisure World is unlikely.

The commercial areas within the City of Laguna Woods were developed within the previous thirty years and are generally well maintained, and remain economically and functionally viable. These properties also house the sales tax generators which support City services that are uniquely suited to the special needs of the majority seniors population. No opportunities for conversion of commercial space to residential use have been identified.

Market Impacts on Development Costs

Growing market demand for housing coupled with diminishing supplies of undeveloped acreage significantly constrains the ability of south Orange County cities to accommodate affordable housing. The price of land reflects this situation.

At the time of this writing only one vacant parcel zoned and suitable for development remains in the City of Laguna Woods. No recent land sales have been recorded. Comparable land sales for the City of Laguna Woods, therefore, are unavailable. Any land valuation effort will include and be derived from comparable sales in surrounding cities. Without significant differences in the physical environments, land costs in the City of Laguna Woods are assumed to be comparable with those in surrounding areas. It is assumed, therefore, that any land made available for development will be valued so as to be no more or no less of a detriment to development of affordable housing than in other non-coastal areas of south Orange County.

Given the relatively high proportion of land costs to total development costs, density increases are one option for facilitating construction of affordable housing. Density increases effectively reduce land costs on a per unit basis and may be accompanied by



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restrictive covenants so as to reserve a proportion of the units for low and very-low income residents.

Consistent with Section 65915 of the California Government Code, the City of Laguna Woods permits an increase in density by a factor of 1.25 or such other reduction in minimum development standards necessary to achieve comparable, identifiable cost reductions. In exchange, the developer covenants to maintain at least ten (10) percent of the units for very low-income households, or fifty (50) percent for low-income households for a period of not less than thirty years.

Construction Costs

Construction costs include the expense of building materials and labor. However, cost is also influenced by market demand and market-based changes in cost of materials. The cost depends on the type of construction and the quality of the product being produced.

Cost factors (per square foot) are used to estimate building costs of new housing in two general classes, one for "average" construction and the other for "good" construction. The City of Laguna Woods has adopted building valuations as approved by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) in April 2001 that are believed to be a general indicator of overall housing construction costs. The valuations for residential development are as follows:

Apartment Houses

Masonry:	\$71.00 average; \$87.00 good
Wood Frame:	\$62.60 average; \$80.40 good

Single Family Dwellings

Masonry:	\$74.20 average; \$95.00 good
Wood Frame:	\$66.00 average; \$90.60 good

In addition to the cost of materials, labor costs can affect the total cost of construction. The cost of labor is based on a number of factors including housing demand, number of contractors in the area, and whether or not laborers belong to a union. Labor costs may represent two to three times the cost of materials.

Construction costs can account for 35%– 45% of total housing costs. Rising construction costs also impact the ability of homeowners or landlords to provide needed rehabilitation of substandard residential units.

The construction cost of housing affects the affordability of new housing and can be a constraint to the creation of affordable housing in the City. One way to reduce construction costs is to reduce the level of physical amenities.



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Cities may revise existing development standards to reduce or eliminate requirements for enclosed parking spaces as a means to lowering construction costs. Local building departments have the authority to approve the use of a lower quality material and/or less costly construction method deemed to be satisfactory and at least equivalent to the applicable State building codes.

Energy Conservation Opportunities

The City of Laguna Woods enforces provisions of Title 24 of the California Administrative Code that require energy conservation in new residences. Standards in Title 24 may result in energy savings of approximately 50% over residential construction practices utilized prior to the Title 24 enactment.

The City of Laguna Woods Building Department is aware of energy conserving design innovations and solar technology. The department utilizes the Solar Systems Code Review Manual and its companion document, the Pool and Spa Solar Systems Code Review Manual, published by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO), to facilitate installation of appropriate solar systems.

Under existing State law (the California Resources Code), local jurisdictions may adopt structural energy conservation standards stricter than existing State standards. Such an increase in standards may have less of an impact in areas with moderate climates such as that in the City of Laguna Woods. Additionally, increases in conservation standards generally increase housing costs, thereby exacerbating the existing housing affordability situation.

One area of concern in the City of Laguna Woods is the cost of electricity, especially as a source of space heating. Because all dwelling units in the Leisure World community have electric heating, all means of reducing the impact of high electric bills through conservation and opportunities for conversion to more efficient heating methods should be considered. Reductions in costs of space heating could appreciably reduce housing-related costs for low-income residents. The City may play a lead role in spearheading a search for alternatives including solar-generated heat and power.

Financing

Financing costs are not subject to local influence. Control of interest rates is determined by national policies and economic conditions. Interest rates directly influence the purchasing power of homebuyers and the cost of home construction through construction loans. Currently, interest rates are at relatively low historic levels, enabling many households to purchase a home. The availability and cost of capital required for pre-development costs for new housing such as land purchase option money and project design and entitlement processing remain a deterrent to development of affordable multiple-family housing.



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H. Housing Resources

The General Plan Land Use Element identifies a 3.3-acre site to fulfill the new construction component of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment of 113 units. The site is currently used as a garden center by the residents of Leisure World and owned by the Golden Rain Foundation. It is located outside the gated community of Leisure World and is immediately adjacent to the Leisure World Golf Course. The location is central to the City and near job and retail centers, and is within walking distance of bus routes that provide regional transportation, commercial centers and a senior citizen center. (See Exhibit H-2)

Table H - 24: Undeveloped Residential Sites

Site	General Plan Designation	Dwelling Unit Capacity	Acres	Density du/acre	Potential Units w/ Density Bonus
Moulton/ Santa Maria	HDR	115	3.3	35	143

Notes: HDR = High Density Residential

The Laguna Woods General Plan designates the site as High Density Residential, and the Zone Code designation is Residential Multi Family (RMF). A density bonus of 25% commensurate with affordability guarantees raises the development potential to 143 units. Based on affordability criteria established by the State Housing and Community Development Department, zoning densities of a minimum twenty-five units per acre provides opportunities for affordable housing to the Very Low income category.

Appropriate housing for the subject site is a high-density, multi-level structure that can provide for sale, or for lease apartment homes. The Laguna Woods Zoning Code, which is currently being amended, will contain Use Permit provisions that allow for relief of development standards, such as height limits and setback requirements for projects proposed to meet affordability objectives and requirements. Use Permit approvals all heard by the Planning Advisory Committee and recommended to the City Council for final approval.



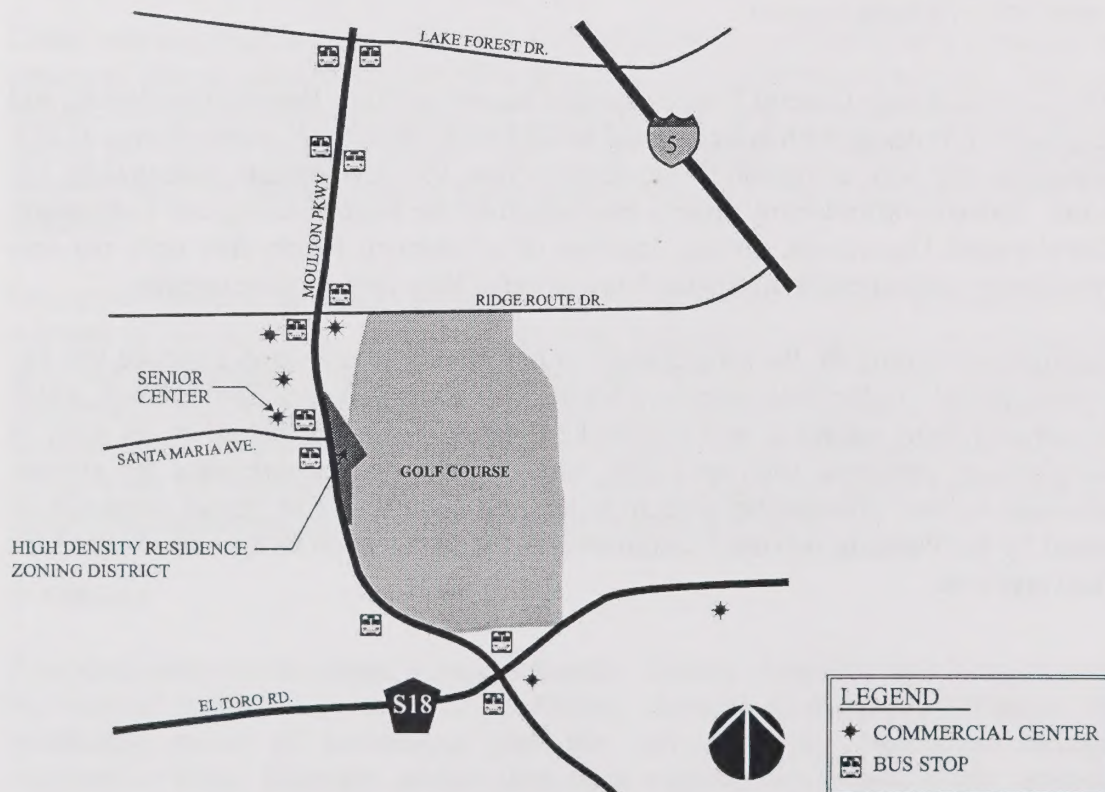
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Exhibit H - 1: Amended Zoning Code Excerpts For Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing Or Senior Citizen Housing Incentive Use Permit. In any district which permits residential uses, a housing incentive use permit application to permit more dwelling units than allowed by zoning, and/or establish special site development standards, may be approved subject to the provisions of this section for the purposes of facilitating affordable and/or senior citizen housing developments.

The 3.3 acre site has direct access from Moulton Parkway and all curb and sidewalk improvements are in place. According to the Federal Flood Insurance Rate map, the subject parcel is not in a flood zone; nor is it mapped by the California Department Conservation to be an area of liquefaction or landslide potential. No active faults are presently known within the City. The nearest active fault is the Newport-Inglewood fault, which is located approximately three miles to the south west of the study area.

Exhibit H - 2: Land Inventory Location Map



All infrastructure including domestic water and sewer are available to the site. There is a sixteen-inch main line running along Moulton Parkway. Residents in Laguna



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Woods consume an average of 246 gallons of water per day per unit, and generate an average of 184 gallons per day of wastewater. Water use as result of this residential development could increase by approximately 35, 178 gallons per day. Wastewater could increase by approximately 26,312 gallons per day. The El Toro Water District has verified that there is sufficient supply and capacity to provide water and wastewater services to accommodate the potential increase in residential units over the planning period. The development standards established in the City Zoning Code for the RMF zoning district are as follows:

Table H - 25: RMF Zoning District - Development Standards

Building Site Area:	Minimum 7,200 square feet
Building Height:	Maximum 65 feet
Area Per Unit (Density)	Minimum net land area per unit = 1,000 square feet
Setbacks: From right-of-way line From property line	Front - 20 feet Side - 5 feet + one extra foot for each story over two Rear - 25 feet Side - 5 feet

Conceptual Project Approval

The RMF zoning district requires a site development review process prior to review of construction plans for a residential multiple-family projects consisting of five or more dwelling units. A complete application for a site development includes the following:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| ☐ Assessor's Parcel Map | 1 |
| ☐ Environmental Permit Screening Form | 1 |
| ☐ Mailing Labels | 3 sets |
| ☐ 300' Radius Property Owners List | 1 |
| ☐ Public Notice Affidavit | 1 |
| ☐ Title Report | 1 |
| ☐ Site Plan | 10 |
| ☐ Engineering Site Plan Information | 10 |
| ☐ Floor Plan | 10 |
| ☐ Building Elevations | 10 |
| ☐ Colored Elevations | 1 |
| ☐ Conceptual Landscape Plan | 10 |



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☐ 8 1/2" x 11", reductions of all plans included in the plan package	1 of each
☐ Photographs of site and surrounding land uses	1
☐ Materials Sample Board - including light fixtures and color	1
☐ Transportation or Parking Study	1
☐ Hazardous Waste Site Affidavit	1
☐ Orange County Fire Authority Submittal Criteria Checklist	1
☐ Planning Application Fees	1

The site development review process takes approximately twelve to sixteen weeks. During this time City staff and the Orange County Fire Authority will review the project based on the following items such as zoning and use compatibility, site layout, circulation and parking, ingress/egress, and landscaping. At the time of approval specific conditions of approval may be applied to the project and must be agreed to by the applicant. Once the site development permit has been approved, construction drawings can be submitted for review.

Grading Permit Review

Prior to the issuance of a building permit, it must be determined if a grading permit will be required. A permit is generally required when the grading involves an excavation or fill exceeding 50 cubic yards, when cut and fill slopes are created, or in locations where geologic stability is suspect.

If a grading permit is required, the associated building permit cannot be issued until the rough grading work is completed and approved. Typical review time for grading applications is eight to twelve weeks. This consists of first, second and sometimes a third review in which comments/corrections are provided to the project civil engineer who will in turn make the appropriate changes to the plans to be in compliance with the City's development code.

Submittal requirements for a grading permit include:

1. A completed Grading Permit application sheet.
2. Six sets of dated grading plans.
3. Two copies of a preliminary soil report.
4. Two copies of a preliminary geology report.
5. A plan check fee deposit based on the estimated earthwork volume and improvement valuation.
6. Three sets of erosion control plans.

Plans submitted for building permits are reviewed for compliance with City Building Ordinances (Building, Plumbing, Mechanical, and Electrical Codes) and State



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building regulations such as Title 24 Energy Conservation Regulations and Handicapped Accessibility Standards. The plan check/ permit review process is as follows.

1. Applicant submits 2 sets of plans which consist of the following;
 - Site Plan
 - Architectural Floor Plan
 - Architectural Elevation and Roof Plans
 - Architectural Details and Material Specifications
 - Structural Foundation Plan
 - Structural Framing Plan
 - Structural Details and Material Specifications
 - Plumbing Plan
 - Mechanical Plans
 - Electrical Plans
 - Structural Calculations
 - Soil Report
 - Energy Calculations
 - Acoustical Report
2. Applicant consults with Fire Authority and Health Care Agency for clearances.
3. Pay Plan Check Fees
4. Typical 1st Plan Check is complete in approximately 2 to 3 weeks.
5. Applicant resubmits corrected plans for recheck.
6. Typical Re-Check is completed in approximately 1 to 2 weeks.

Once plans are approved a licensed contractor must bring proof of insurances and workers compensation to pull permits.

Housing Programs

Various federal and state programs are designed to promote development of housing for low and very low-income households and for persons with special needs. Programs that may be of use in the City of Laguna Woods are listed below. Information related to these programs will be updated annually and available from the Laguna Woods Community Development Department.

Federal Programs

- **Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)** – This program is intended to enhance and preserve the City's affordable housing stock. Funds are awarded to the City on a formula basis for housing activities. Eligible



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activities include acquisition, rehabilitation, economic development, and public services. CDBG grants benefit primarily households with incomes not exceeding 80% of the County median family income.

- ***Section 8 Rental Assistance Program*** – This program provides rental assistance payments to owners of private market rate units on behalf of very-low income tenants.
- ***Section 811/202 Program*** – Non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives are eligible to receive no interest capital advances from HUD for the construction of very-low income rental housing for senior citizens and disabled persons. Project-based assistance is also provided in conjunction with this program. Section 811 can be used to develop group homes, independent living facilities, and intermediate care facilities. Eligible activities include acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, and rental assistance.

State Programs

- ***California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) Multiple Rental Housing Programs*** – This program provides below market-rate financing to builders and developers of multiple-family and elderly rental housing. Tax-exempt bonds provide below market mortgage money. Eligible activities include new construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition of properties with 20-150 units.
- ***Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)*** – LIHTC provides tax credits to individuals and corporations that invest in low-income rental housing. Tax credits are sold to corporations and people with high tax liability and proceeds are used to create housing. Eligible activities include new construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition.
- ***California Community Reinvestment Corporation (CCRC)*** – This private, non-profit mortgage-banking consortium provides long-term debt financing for affordable multi-family rental housing. Eligible activities include new construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition.

I. Review of Previous Housing Element

State law requires that each Housing Element include a review of the progress made toward achieving the affordable housing goals of the previous Housing Element, and of the effectiveness and appropriateness of those previously adopted objectives. This Housing Element is the first prepared for the City of Laguna Woods since the City's incorporation in 1999 and, therefore, no previous Element review is included.



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J. Data Sources

Various sources of information are consulted in preparing the Housing Element. The 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census provides the basis for population and household characteristics. The following sources of information have been used to supplement and update information contained in the 2000 U.S. Census:

- Population and demographic data from the State Department of Finance.
- Housing market information, such as home sales, rents and vacancies, as updated by City surveys, and property tax assessor files and information provided in the Leisure World News.
- Local and County public and nonprofit agency information on special needs populations, available services, and systemic failures.
- Housing condition information provided by the City of Laguna Woods.
- Orange County Progress Report (2000) demographic information.
- Golden Rain Foundation

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